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THOUGHTS

IN THE

CLOISTER AND THE CROWD

BY

SIR ARTHUR HELPS, K.C.B.
Author of *Companions of My Solitude*

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GLASGOW
WILSON & McCORMICK, SAINT VINCENT STREET
1883

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Ἔχουσι δὲ (γνώμαι) εἰς τοὺς λόγους βοήθειαν μεγάλην, μιαν μὲν δὴ, διὰ την φορτικότητα τῶν ἀκροατῶν· χαίρουσι γὰρ, ἐαν τις καθόλου λέγων, ἐπιτύχῃ τῶν δοξῶν, ἃς ἐκεῖνοι κατὰ μέρος ἔχουσι.

ARIST. *Rhet. Lib.* ii. c. 21.

"Aphorisms, representing a knowledge broken, do invite men to inquire farther; whereas methods, carrying the show of a total, do secure men, as if they were at farthest."

BACON.—*Advancement of Learning*

THOUGHTS

IN THE

Cloister and the Crowd.

WE all seek happiness so eagerly, that in the pursuit we often lose that joyous sense of existence, and those quiet daily [illegible]s, the value of which our pride alone prevents us from acknowledging.

It has been said with some meaning, that if men would but rest in silence, they might always hear the music of the spheres.

Those who never philosophized until they met with disappointments, have mostly become disappointed philosophers.

The unfortunate Ladurlad did not desire the sleep that for ever fled his weary eyelids with more earnestness than most people seek the deep slumber of a decided opinion.

The business of the head is to form a good heart, and not merely to rule an evil one, as is generally imagined.

Themistocles said that he could not touch a lute, but that he could make a small town a great state. Did any one

think of suggesting to him, that to touch a lute skilfully, required the innocent labour of a life; but that one act of unscrupulous wickedness, one act which Aristides might admire but could not approve, would raise a small state to pre-eminence, and enable it to tyrannize with impunity? Oh, the world's especial heroes!—find me any thing more contemptible. How often are they men who throw the mantle of vigorous intellect over the falseness, the heartlessness, the restlessness, which especially characterize a vulgar mind *The calf to which the Israelites bowed down, was it not made of the trinkets of the common people?*

There is hardly a more common

error than that of taking the man who has *one* talent, for a genius.

The world will find out that part of your character which concerns it: that which especially concerns yourself, it will leave for you to discover.

They tell us that "Pity is akin to Love;" if so, Pity must be a poor relation.

The step from the sublime to the ridiculous is not so short as the step from the confused to the sublime in the minds of most people, from want of a proper standard of comparison. If you hear a fine sentence from Æschines,

you may remember one still more noble from Demosthenes: but when a person comes up to you and exclaims, "I have put my hand into the hamper; I have looked upon the sacred barley; I have eaten out of the drum; I have drunk and was well pleased; I have said *konx ompax*, and it is finished!"* you are confounded, and instantly begin to admire. We always believe the clouds to be much higher than they really are, until we see them resting on the shoulders of the mountains.

There is no occasion to regard with continual dislike, one who had formerly a mean opinion of your merits; for you are never so sure of permanent esteem

* Eleusinian Mysteries.

as from the man who once esteemed you lightly, and has corrected his mistake—if it be a mistake.

A friend is one who does not laugh when you are in a ridiculous position. Some may deny such a test, saying, that if a man have a keen sense of the ridiculous, he cannot help being amused, even though his friend be the subject of ridicule. No,—your friend is one who ought to sympathize with you, and not with the multitude.

You cannot expect that a friend should be like the atmosphere, which confers all manner of benefits upon you, and without which indeed it would be impossible to live, but at the same time is never in your way.

It appears to be the opinion of a celebrated geologist, that the former changes of the earth's surface may in a great measure be referred to causes similar to those now in operation. The history of nations is analogous to that of the earth on which they acted their part. The earthquakes have been chronicled—the siege, the battle, the revolt, have been chronicled; and when men have asked for causes, the historian has answered by an appeal to these convulsions of the world. The silent progress of arts, of civilization, of religion, like the perpetual action of the sea, has often been neglected altogether.

We ask how the soil became so fertile, and the historian points to a landmark.

The proverbs of a country are often the proverbs of that country, and cannot be translated without losing some of their meaning; but there is an eastern proverb which rightly belongs to the western world:

"People resemble still more the time in which they live, than they resemble their fathers."

It would often be as well to condemn a man unheard as to condemn him upon the reasons which he openly avows for any course of action.

The apparent foolishness of others is but too frequently our own ignorance, or what is much worse, it is the direct measure of our own tyranny.

The extreme sense of perfection in some men is the greatest obstacle to their success.

Emulation, sometimes but a more plausible name for envy, is like the Amreeta cup: it may be the greatest blessing—it often proves the greatest curse. When a youth is taught to feel emulation, not of putting further and further back the bounds of science, not of comprehending the mighty minds of olden time, not of benefitting the state by profound policy, but of *being* a great mathematician, a distinguished scholar, a successful statesman; then the cup —a golden one, perhaps, for

> "—— nulla aconita bibuntur
> Fictilibus,"

—will eventually prove one of unmixed bitterness.

Those who once submit to the tyranny of this absorbing passion, only struggle —to become its more devoted victims. Like the spur-ridden horses in the Corso, the greater efforts they make, the more severe are their sufferings under an ever-clinging tormentor.

There is nothing more painful to contemplate, than a young child impressed with a desire to excel, when a fatal self-sentience has usurped the place of childishness. It has been said that the children of the poor are never young: I am sure that the children of the ambitious are equally unfortunate. Rousseau observes that "it is very strange, that, ever since mankind have taken it into their heads to trouble themselves so much about the education of children, they should never have thought of any

other instruments to effect their purpose than those of emulation, jealousy, envy, pride, covetousness, and servile fear—all passions the most dangerous, the most apt to ferment, and the most fit to corrupt the soul, even before the body is formed. With every premature instruction we instil into the head, we implant a vice in the bottom of the heart."

Let no colour be given to the theory of this morbid philosopher, who seems to have thought that people met together to constitute society for the purpose of more effectually tormenting each other. There are many objects that call for our united energies. Let us strive to overcome the obstinacy of the material world, to make nature surrender up her secrets, to ascertain with more certainty the best forms of government, the wisest

modes of life, the real limits of the understanding; but do not let us forever be engaged in a petty contest with our fellow-men, in order that we may be, or appear to be, less ignorant than those around us.

The noblest objects in this life may be too intensely regarded. Newton once gazed upon the sun until he was haunted by its image whithersoever he went and wheresoever he looked.

The religion of some sectarians consists in a definite notion of an infinite subject.

When the subtle man fails in deceiving those around him, they are loud in their reproaches; when he succeeds in deceiving his own conscience, it is silent. The last is not the least misfortune, for it were better to make many enemies, than to silence one such friend.

It is quite impossible to understand the character of a person from one action, however striking that action may be.

The youngest mathematician knows that one point is insufficient to determine a straight line, much less any thing so curve-like as the character even of the most simple and upright of mankind.

If you are obliged to judge from a single action, let it not be a striking one.

Men rattle their chains—to manifest their freedom.

"*Eventus stultorum magister:*"—and would that it were only over the minds of the foolish, and would that it were only over the minds of the spectators, that the event ruled so imperiously; but, alas! it is often not so important in itself, as in the fatal influence it exercises over the mind, or I should rather say the temperament of the principal actor himself. A Brutus was not ashamed to conceal his patriotism under the mask of idiocy, and there have been men in all ages who were content to abide, who even felt a proud pleasure in abiding under the cloud for a season; but rare have been these instances, and few have found consolation

in the idea which the poet of the desert might have suggested to them, *that the lesser lights alone are those which never suffer an eclipse.* Hence it is that the experienced have universally agreed in the immense advantage of early success.

The failure of many of our greatest men in their early career—a fact on which the ignorant and weak are fond of vainly leaning for support—is a very interesting subject for consideration.

The rebelliousness of great natures is a good phrase, but I fear it will not entirely satisfy all our questionings. It has been said, that if we could, with our limited capacities and muffled souls, compare this life and the future, and retain the impression that our daily duties here would be neglected, and that all below would become "weary, flat, stale,

and unprofitable." Now may not the pursuit of any particular study or worldly aim become to the far-seeing genius disgusting in the same way? May he not be like one on a lofty rock, who can behold and comprehend all the objects in the distance, can thence discover the true path that leadeth to the glad city; but, from his very position, cannot without great pain and danger scrutinize the ground immediately under him? Many fail from the extent of their views. "Nevertheless, (as Bacon says) I shall yield, that he that cannot contract the sight of his mind, as well as disperse and dilate it, wanteth a great faculty."

There is another cause of failure that has not often been contemplated. The object may be too eagerly desired, ever to be obtained. Its importance, even if

it be important, may too often be presented to the mind. The end may always appear so clearly defined, that the aspirant, forgetting the means that are necessary, forgetting the distance that must intervene, is for ever stretching out his hand to grasp that which is not yet within his power. The calm exercise of his faculties is prevented, the habit of concentrating his attention is destroyed, and one form under a thousand aspects disturbs his diseased imagination. The unhappy sailor thinks upon his home, and the smiling fields, and the village church, until he sees them for ever pictured in the deep, and with folded arms he continues to gaze, incapable alike of thought or action. This disease is called the calenture. *There is an intellectual calenture.*

The worst use that can be made of success is to boast of it.

Few have wished for memory so much as they have longed for forgetfulness.

I can understand the ambition of former days, when the earth, the birth-place of Jupiter, was the universe to those who inhabited it; when the stars but served to register "my nativity," and lead on the way to future fortune. I can understand the ambition of an Alexander, and still better his tears after having conquered a world, which in his eyes was everything, and in ours is a mere point that will not even serve as a base for measuring the distances of the heavenly bodies: I can understand the fascination

of ambitious pursuits at a time when art, science, and literature were in darkness; when religion itself was in its rude infancy;—but at the present day, it is difficult to comprehend the ambition of a philosopher, of a Christian, of a Christian philosopher. And yet such things are.

Perhaps it is the secret thought of many, that an ardent love of power and wealth, however culpable in itself, is nevertheless a proof of superior sagacity. But in answer to this it has been well remarked, that even a child can clench its little hand the moment it is born: and if they imagine that the successful at any rate must be sagacious, let them remember the saying of a philosopher, *that the meanest reptiles are found at the summit of the loftiest pillars.*

If we are really in a state of intellectual

progress; if we are not deceived by the outward shows of things; if we are not giving applause, merely because across the stage

"Esseda festinant, pilenta, petorrita, naves;"

then indeed we may hope for the days when ambition, in the sense which the word now bears, will be the last infirmity to which a noble mind will own subjection.

The Simoon of the desert is not the only evil that may be avoided by stooping.

The Pyramids! What a lesson to those who desire a name in the world does the fate of these restless, brick-piling monarchs afford. Their names are not

known, and the only hope for them is, that by the labours of some cruelly industrious antiquarian, they may at last become more *definite* objects of contempt.

We should remember that in every undertaking, each individual concerned has his own peculiar views; and that as no two human beings can have exactly the same motives, so they can never act, as the saying is, *with one mind.*

We talk of early prejudices, of the prejudices of religion, of position, of education; but in truth we only mean the prejudices of others. It is by the observation of trivial matters that the wise learn the influence of prejudice over their own minds at all times, and the

wonderfully moulding power which those minds possess in making all things around conform to the idea of the moment. Let a man but note how often he has seen likenesses where no resemblance exists; admired ordinary pictures, because he thought they were from the hands of celebrated masters; delighted in the commonplace observations of those who had gained a reputation for wisdom; laughed where no wit was; and he will learn with humility to make allowance for the effect of prejudice in others.

In a quarrel between two friends, if one of them, even the injured one, were, in the retirement of his chamber, to consider himself as the hired advocate of the other at the court of wronged friendship; and were to omit all the facts

which told in his own favour, to exaggerate all that could possibly be said against himself, and to conjure up from his imagination a few circumstances of the same tendency; he might with little effort make a good case for his former friend. Let him be assured, that whatever the most skilful advocate could say, his poor friend really believes and feels; and then, instead of wondering at the insolence of such a traitor walking about in open day, he will pity his friend's delusion, have some gentle misgivings as to the exact propriety of his own conduct, and perhaps sue for an immediate reconciliation.

There are often two characters of a man —that which is believed in by people in

general, and that which he enjoys among his associates. It is supposed, but vainly, that the latter is always a more accurate approximation to the truth, whereas in reality it is often a part which he performs to admiration: while the former is the result of certain minute traits, certain inflexions of voice and countenance, which cannot be discussed, but are felt as it were instinctively by his domestics and by the outer world. The impressions arising from these slight circumstances he is able to efface from the minds of his constant companions, or from habit they have ceased to observe them.

We often err by contemplating an individual solely in his relation and behaviour to us, and generalizing from that

with more rapidity than wisdom. We might as well argue that the moon has no rotation about her axis, because the same hemisphere is always presented to our view.

We are pleased with one who instantly assents to our opinions: but we love a proselyte.

The accomplished hypocrite does not exercise his skill upon every possible occasion for the sake of acquiring facility in the use of his instruments. In all unimportant matters, who is more just, more upright, more candid, more honourable?

An elaborate defence, if not the best, is certainly the gravest form of accusation.

Those who are successfully to lead their fellow-men, should have once possessed the nobler feelings. We have all known individuals whose magnanimity was not likely to be troublesome on any occasion; but then they betrayed their own interests by unwisely omitting the consideration, that such feelings might exist in the breasts of those whom they had to guide and govern: for they themselves cannot even remember the time when in their eyes justice appeared preferable to expediency, the happiness of others to self-interest, or the welfare of a State to the advancement of a party.

The ear is an organ of finer sensibility than the eye according to the measurement of philosophers.*

Remember this, ye diplomatists: there are some imperturbable countenances, but a skilful ear will almost infallibly detect guile.

Slight thinkers imagine, that when a man is inattentive to the forms, he is also inattentive to the ways of the world.

It is a shallow mind that suspects or rejects an offered kindness, because it is unable to discover the motive. It would have been as wise for the Egyptians to have scorned the pure waters of the Nile,

* Vide Herschel, Art. *Light*, Encyc. Met.

because they were not quite certain about the source of that mighty river.

To simulate is much easier than to dissemble.

Hence, he who is suffering from intense grief, is not cheerful, but wildly gay. Hence the man of philanthropic feeling, after a short intercourse with the world, not unfrequently affects the misanthrope. Hence, strange as it may appear, a forwardness in society often arises from conscious timidity. The common saying, "extremes meet," is a statement of the fact, and not a solution of the difficulty.

War may be the game of kings, but, like the games at ancient Rome, it is

generally exhibited to please and pacify the people.

The sun is shining all around, but there are some who will only contemplate their own shadows.

Strong feelings are generally allied to strong intellects, and both together form the truly great character. Even the great in science are not always exceptions; witness Galileo, Pascal, Newton, D'Alembert, Cuvier, and many others.

The great man is one of boundless love and extended sympathies, not the general philanthropist, "who makes animating speeches at religious meetings, about sending the words of truth and love through the whole family of man, and

never speaks one loving and true word in his own family:" but one who loves the good, the true, the beautiful; who thinks not his own pursuit the only path of a wise man; who thinks not his own sect the only ark in which the covenant is preserved; who can weep over the weaknesses, and glory in the dignity and grandeur of human nature—himself a man. The poet has said, that

> "The man of abject soul in vain
> Shall walk the Marathonian plain;
> Or thrid the shadowy gloom,
> That still invests the guardian pass,
> Where stood, sublime, Leonidas,
> Devoted to the tomb."

Not only the Marathonian plain, but every spot on this bright earth, calls forth the sympathies of the great man, for it may have been a witness to human joys

or human sufferings; and the fields too he loveth for their own sake.

Misery appears to improve the intellect, but this is only because it dismisses fear.

Intellectual powers may dignify, but cannot diminish our sorrows; and when the feelings are wounded, and the soul is disquieted within you, to seek comfort from purely intellectual employments, is but to rest upon a staff which pierces rather than supports.

When your friend is suffering under great affliction, either be entirely silent, or offer none but the most common topics of consolation. For in the first place

they are the best; and also from their commonness they are easily understood. Extreme grief will not pay attention to any new thing.

There are few who would need advisers, if they were only accustomed to appeal to themselves in their calmest, holiest moments. If, when embarrassed with doubt as to any course of action, they would turn aside from the immediate tumult of the world, and from the vain speaking of those who "darken counsel by words without knowledge;" and would then commune with their own hearts, alone, at night, the heavens their silent counsellors, they would act not always in accordance with the wise men of this

world, but with that wisdom which bringeth peace.

There is a want of refinement in the man who loves a parody.

It is commonly remarked, that we are indifferent to the evils and sufferings of a state through which we ourselves have passed. Hence, from the frequent cruelty of men to the brute creation, we may put some trust in the theory of Archelaus, who anticipated Lord Monboddo, and taught "that mankind had insensibly separated themselves from the common herd of the inferior animals." This philosopher however does not seem to have contemplated the probability of any relapse into the brute state.

Irony is Contempt disguised as an actor in the ancient tragedy, with the buskin and the mask, at once elevated and concealed. It may give your adversary discomfort, but will never persuade him to alter his opinion; for, in order to convince, we must not only be, but appear in earnest; and, as the son of Sirach observes, "The finding out of parables is a wearisome labour of the mind."

When we consider the incidents of former days, and perceive, while reviewing the long line of causes, how the most important events of our lives originated in the most trifling circumstances; how the beginning of our greatest happiness or greatest misery is to be attributed to

a delay, to an accident, to a mistake ; we learn a lesson of profound humility. This is the irony of life.

The irony of a little child and its questions, at times how bitter !

Those who support startling paradoxes in society, must expect severe treatment. By the articles of war, the conquerors never spare those who maintain indefensible positions.

Eccentric people are never loved for their eccentricities.

What is called firmness, is often nothing more than confirmed self-love.

The *total* failure of many a scheme

arises from the apparent certainty of its *partial* success.

Many know how to please, but know not when they have ceased to give pleasure.

The same in arguing: they never lead people to a conclusion, and permit them to draw it for themselves; being unaware that most persons, if they have but placed one brick in a building, are interested in the progress, and boast of the success of a work in which they have been so *materially engaged.*

There is an honesty which is but decided selfishness in disguise. The man who will not refrain from expressing his sentiments and manifesting his feel-

ings, however unfit the time, however inappropriate the place, however painful to others this expression may be, lays claim forsooth to our approbation as an honest man, and sneers at those of finer sensibility as hypocrites.

Do not mistake energy for enthusiasm; the softest speakers are often the most enthusiastic of men.

The best commentary upon any work of literature, is a faithful life of the author. And one reason, among many, why it must always be so advantageous to read the works of the illustrious dead, is that their lives are more fairly written, and their characters better understood.

It may appear to an unthinking person that the life, perhaps an unobtrusive one,

of the man who has devoted himself to abstract and speculative subjects, can be of no very considerable importance. But it is far otherwise. For instance, if Locke had never been engaged in the affairs of this world, would his biography have been of no importance if it had only informed us that for many years he devoted himself to the study of medicine? Are there no passages in his Essay concerning Human Understanding, which such a fact tends to elucidate? Or is it not, in reality, the clue to a right understanding of all his metaphysical writings? *

How often does a single anecdote reveal the real motive which prompted an author to write a particular work, and the influence of which is visible in every page.

* Vide Victor Cousin.

"When I returned from Spain by Paris, (says Lord Clarendon,) Mr. Hobbes frequently came to me and told me his book (which he would call Leviathan) was then printing in England, and that he received every week a sheet to correct, of which he showed me one or two sheets, and thought it would be finished within little more than a month; and showed me the epistle to Mr. Godolphin, which he meant to set before it, and read it to me, and concluded that he knew, when I read his book, I would not like it, and thereupon mentioned some of his conclusions. Upon which I asked him why he would publish such doctrine: to which, after a discourse between jest and earnest upon the subject, he said, '*The truth is, I have a mind to go home.*'" Perhaps this

anecdote may explain many hard sayings in the Leviathan.

It is worthy to remark, that "The Prince" is now supposed to have been written solely from a wish to please the ruling powers, as appears in a private letter from Machiavelli to his friend the Florentine ambassador at the Papal court, which was discovered at Rome, and first published to the world in 1810, by Ridolfi. In this letter Machiavelli says that this work ought to be agreeable to a prince, and especially to a prince lately raised to power; and that he himself cannot continue to live as he was then living, without becoming contemptible through poverty. And also, in his dedication to Lorenzo de Medici, after having said that subjects understand the disposition of princes best, as it is necessary to

descend into the plains to consider the nature of the mountains, he thus concludes: "And if your Magnificence from the very point of your highness will sometimes cast your eyes upon those inferior places, you will see how undeservedly I undergo an extreme and continual despite of fortune."

After this we are not so much astonished at finding the following gentle admonition: "Let a prince therefore take the surest courses he can to maintain his life and state: the means will always be thought honourable, and be commended by every one."

There is an embarrassed manner of speaking which arises from the crowd of ideas that press upon the attention of a

rich and well-stored mind; but which is commonly supposed to be the effect of an imperfect conception of *one* idea.

Thoughts there are, not to be translated into any language, and spirits alone can read them.

Our knowledge of human nature is for the most part empirical; and it would often be better, if, instead of endeavouring to say some new thing ourselves, we were to confirm without more words the sayings of another. I shall accordingly subjoin the following passage from South's sermons:— "Ingratitude sits on its throne, with Pride on its right hand, and Cruelty on its left, worthy supporters of

such a state. You may rest upon this as a proposition of an eternal unfailing truth —that there neither is, nor ever was, any person remarkably ungrateful, who was not also insufferably proud; nor, convertibly, any one proud, who was not equally ungrateful."

The noblest works, like the temple of Solomon, are brought to perfection in silence.

The man of genius may be a guide, but the man of talents will be a leader. And he who is so fortunate as to combine talents and genius, may become an inventor.

Some of our law maxims are admirable rules of conduct. If, in spite of the censorious calumny of the world, we considered "a man innocent until he were proved guilty;" or if, in our daily thoughts, words, and actions, we did but "give the prisoner the benefit of the doubt;" what much better Christians we should become.

That any necessary connexion exists between gravity and wisdom, has long been abandoned; but there is still a lurking belief that gravity and prudence are nearly allied. For all prudential purposes, you may as well be thoughtless as abstracted.

Those who are devoted to science solely; the men,

"Who never caught a noon-tide dream
By murmur of a running stream,
Could strip, for aught the prospect yields
To *them*, their verdure from the fields;
And take the radiance from the clouds
In which the sun his setting shrouds;"

who look coldly round a superb edifice, and ask *why* it was built, and think *how* it was constructed, are not unlike the bones spoken of by the prophet Ezekiel —"And, behold, there were very many in the open valley, and lo, they were very dry." We ought to pray that either domestic affection, or refined philanthropy, or sincere religion, may be infused into their hard natures, saying, "O breath, breathe upon these slain, that they may live."

It is an error to suppose that no man understands his own character. Most

persons know even their failings very well, only they persist in giving them names different from those usually assigned by the rest of the world; and they compensate for this mistake by naming, at first sight, with singular accuracy, these very same failings in others.

Those who are much engaged in acquiring knowledge, will not always have time for deep thought or intense feeling.

Men love to contradict their general character. Thus a man is of a gloomy and suspicious temperament, is deemed by all morose, and ere long finds out the general opinion. He then suddenly deviates into some occasional acts of courtesy. Why? Not because he ought,

not because his nature is changed; but because he dislikes being thoroughly understood. He will not be the *thing* whose behaviour on any occasion the most careless prophet can with certainty foretell.

"——— Delight in little things,
The buoyant child surviving in the man."

Alas! it is not the child, but the boy that generally survives in the man.

When we see the rapid motions of insects at evening, we exclaim, how happy they must be!—so inseparably are activity and happiness connected in our minds.

The most enthusiastic man in a cause is rarely chosen as the leader.

We have some respect for one who, if he tramples on the feelings of others, tramples on his own with equal apparent indifference.

Tact is the result of refined sympathy.

It is frequently more safe to ridicule a man personally, than to decry the order to which he belongs.

Every man has made up his mind about his own merits; but, like the unconvinced believers in religion, he will not listen with patience to any doubts

upon a subject which he himself would be most unwilling to investigate.

The love of being considered well-read is one of the most fatal of all the follies which subdue the present generation. It is not so much what we have read, as what we can readily recall, that will give us real pleasure and permanent advantage. I do not mean for a moment to contend that it is necessary to read every book with great attention, or to say that our taste may not insensibly be formed by works of which we do not remember a single sentence. In the pure sciences, to have caught the modes and the spirit of the reasoning, will perhaps be sufficient for all who do not intend to pursue these branches of knowledge: but what is the

use of having read a book of travels, if we only remember the frontispiece, "A picture of the author in the dress of the country!" What avails it to have perused the lives of the learned, and the witty, and the valiant, and the wise, if, without having gained one single rule of action, we merely remember that in all ages the generality of mankind have contrived to make themselves miserable by their own follies and their own vices; and that when there would have been a happy one, he was persecuted? What avails it to have read so many polemical discussions, if we merely remember the intemperate zeal and the learned bitterness which gave equal animation to each contending party? Surely it would be better to remember Coleridge's "Ode to Dejection," Wordsworth's "Intimations

of Immortality from the recollections of early childhood," Shelley's "Invocation to Night," Southey's beautiful description of

> "How happily the years
> Of Thalaba went by,"

Manfred's last Soliloquy, the fond look of "The Adventurous Boy," leaving his native village, in the Pleasures of Memory; Moore's Irish Melody,

> "As a beam o'er the face of the waters may glow;"

and the Cotter's Saturday Night; than to have read all the poets from Chaucer downwards, and possess a dim shadowy notion rather of their merits than of them—enough forsooth to talk critically.

We want the brilliant ideas of the

poet, and the majestic thoughts of the philosopher, as companions for our weary hours, to charm away the solemn dullness of every-day life, to wander with us over the hills, in solitude to form the link between us and our fellow-creatures, in the society of those we love, to be a test of their perfect sympathy; and therefore we must not spare the labour of imprinting them on the tablets of our memory for ever. "Knowledge," as Bacon in his overflowing language exclaims, "is not a couch whereupon to rest a searching and restless spirit; or a terrace for a wandering and variable mind to walk up and down with a fair prospect; or a tower of state for a proud mind to raise itself upon; or a fort or commanding ground for strife and contention; or a shop for profit or sale—but

a rich storehouse for the glory of the Creator, and the relief of man's estate."

The opinion which a person gives of any book, is frequently not so much a test of his intellect or his taste, as it is of the extent of his reading. An indifferent work may be joyfully welcomed by one who has neither had time nor opportunity to form a literary taste. It is from comparisons between different parts of the same book, that you must discover the depth and judgment of an uncultivated mind.

"It is my opinion," says Herodotus, "that the Nile overflows in the summer season, because in the winter, the sun, driven by storms from his usual course,

ascends into the higher regions of the air above Libya."

Many a man will smile at the delightful simplicity of the historian, and still persevere in dogmatizing about subjects upon which he does not even possess information enough to support him in hazarding a conjecture.

It is not in the solar spectrum only that the least warmth is combined with the deepest colour.

How often we should stop in the pursuit of folly, if it were not for the difficulties that continually beckon us onwards.

Simple Ignorance has in its time been

complimented by the names of most of the vices, and of all the virtues.

Extremes do *not* meet, but are often linked together.

Respect and dutiful kindness are the ashes of love; and are not unfrequently found in greatest abundance where the flame is altogether extinct.

No man ever praised two persons *equally*—and pleased them both.

Solitude is of many kinds. There is the solitude of our own chamber—the solitude of the gentle walk—of the great library—of the gay ball-room—of the desert. Solitude must not be confounded

with retirement. A man may be solitary without retiring from the world; may seek retirement, and yet not be solitary. Some are impatient of the human voice, others of the human countenance; the former are contemplative, the latter misanthropical. The former in their lonely walks would courteously return, rather pleased than pained, the silent salutation of the unobtrusive peasant; to the others, nature undeformed by the footsteps of man alone is tolerable.

A great many wise sayings have been uttered about the effects of solitary retirement; but the motives which impel men to seek it are not more various than the effects which it produces on different individuals. One thing is certain, that those who can with truth affirm that they are "never less alone than when alone,"

might generally add, that they never feel more lonely than when *not* alone.

A keen observer of mankind has said, that "to aspire is to be alone:" he might have extended his aphorism—to think deeply upon any subject is indeed to be alone.

In the world of mind, as in that of matter, we always occupy a position.

He who is continually changing his point of view will see more, and that too more clearly, than one who, statue-like, for ever stands upon the same pedestal; however lofty and well-placed that pedestal may be.

A very grave author, Agrippa of Nettesheim by name, who lived in those times

which are familiarly called the Dark Ages, wrote a serious treatise, "De nobilitate et præcellentiâ fœminei sexus;" in which, not omitting our first parents, he endeavours to show that throughout all time women have been very superior to men. But I do not remember that he devoted an especial chapter to the consideration of the patient endurance of women: and in this how measureless is their superiority! Does a man suffer injury, all round him feel his bitterness. The world is but a stage for exhibiting his wrath; and if any one presumes to complain, he answers with the pride of an Achilles—"I too have suffered." A woman endures with cheerfulness, *suffers so that those around her suffer not; for*

"That woman could not be of nature's making
Whom, being kind, her misery made not kinder."

The feelings often cut a Gordian knot, which reason could never have untied; and the oracle—is it not fulfilled?

Some people are too foolish—to commit follies.

The knowledge of others which experience gives us, is of slight value when compared with that which we obtain from having proved the inconstancy of our own desires.

The world will tolerate many vices, but not their diminutives.

The vain man and the proud man both love praise. The former is mortified if but one withhold his applause; the latter is not discontented if but one applaud —*and that one is himself.*

A great and frequent error in our judgment of human nature is to suppose that those sentiments and feelings have no existence, which may be only for a time concealed.

The precious metals are not found at the surface of the earth, except in sandy places.

It is a weak thing to tell half your story, and then ask your friend's advice—a still weaker thing to take it.

The maxim "*noscitur a sociis*" is true to a certain extent; but it is generally applied to prove something which such a maxim as *noscitur a socio* would render only probable.

How to gain the advantages of society, without at the same time losing ourselves, is a question of no slight difficulty. The wise man often follows the crowd at a little distance, in order that he may not come suddenly upon it, nor become entangled with it, and that he may with some means of amusement maintain a clear and quiet pathway.

The author of a book called "Rural Philosophy," laments that such extravagant regard has been paid to the productions of pagan writers; that though we

possess so much that is wise, so much that is beautiful, and at the same time so much that is unread, in the literature of our own country; yet we still continue to go down to the Philistines "to sharpen, every one his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock," as if there were no smith in Israel. Would that this were the only cause of lamentation! but how imperfectly is the work executed among the Philistines, and what little use is generally made of the share, the coulter, the axe, and the mattock, when sharpened. We are told that the foundation is being laid, that the individual will himself complete the superstructure: but youth, with its anxious love of knowledge, passes by; and the poets, the historians, the moralists, the metaphysicians, the divines of his father-

land, are frequently unknown even by name to the hypercritical scholar who can give the various readings in a fragment of Æschylus or Aristophanes.

There is a war at present going on against the study of the dead languages. I should be sorry to see the enemies of our present system prevail; for there are immense advantages which arise from the study of the science of grammar in the dead languages.* Even if it were possible for these advantages to be obtained in any other way, I should still be sorry if our youths had not the wit of Horace, the wisdom of Thucydides, the tenderness of Sophocles, the grand simplicity of good old Homer, urged upon them for a time. But, on the other hand, it would be well to consider

* Vide Sewell's *Cultivation of the Intellect.*

whether the defects pointed out can be remedied, and the universal application of the system still maintained—and if not, whether the benefit arising from an exception in some particular cases, would be entirely counterbalanced by the evil of making any exception whatever.

It requires a strong mind to bear up against several languages. Some persons have learnt so many, that they have ceased to think in any one. Roger Ascham's opinion is, that "as a hawk fleeth not hie with one wing, so a man reacheth not to excellency with one tongue." But the scholar seems to have forgotten that the Greeks had no dead languages to learn; yet poets, historians, and philosophers did attain to

excellency among so unfortunate a people. "The Greeks," says an eloquent writer, "who were masters of composition, were ignorant of all languages but their own. They concentrated their study of the genius of expression upon one tongue. To this they owe that blended simplicity and strength of style, which the imitative Romans, with all their splendour, never attained."

Pride, if not the origin, is the medium of all wickedness—the atmosphere, without which it would instantly die away.

Tolerance is the only real test of civilization.

Some are contented to wear the mask of foolishness, in order to carry on their

vicious schemes; and not a few are willing to shelter their folly behind the respectability of downright vice.

There are some books which we at first reject, because we have neither felt, nor seen, nor thought, nor suffered enough to understand and appreciate them. Perhaps "The Excursion" is one of these.

A great library! What a mass of human misery is here commemorated!—how many buried hopes surround us! The author of that work was the greatest natural philosopher that ever enlightened mankind. His biographers are now disputing whether at one period of his life

he was not of unsound mind—but all agree that he was afterwards able to understand his own writings.

The author of those numerous volumes was logician, metaphysician, natural historian, philosopher; his sanity was never doubted, and with his last breath he regretted his birth, mourned over his life, expressed his fear of death, and called upon the Cause of causes to pity him. His slightest thoughts continued to domineer over the world for ages, until they were in some measure silenced by those works which contain the unfettered meditations of a very great man, who, being more careless than corrupt in the administration of his high office, has gone down to posterity, as

* "The wisest, brightest, meanest, of mankind."

For his wisdom has embalmed his meanness.

Those volumes contain the weighty, if not wise opinions of one who, amidst penury and wretchedness, first learnt to moralize with companions as poor and wretched as himself. Even in his latter years, when sought by a monarch, and listened to with submission by all who approached him, his life can scarcely be called a happy one; yet he must have enjoyed some moments of triumph, if not of happiness, in contemplating the severe but well-merited rebuke which he inflicted upon that courtier, who could behold his difficulties with all the indifference that belongs to good-breeding, and then thought fit, in the hour of his success, to encumber him with paltry praises.

Those poems were the burning words of one

——"Cradled into poetry by wrong,
Who learnt in suffering what he taught in song."

The slightest foibles of this unhappy man have been brought into odious prominence, for he was the favourite author of his age, and therefore the property of the public.

That boyish book absolved its author from a father's cares; and he was one to whom those cares would have been dearest joys, who loved to look upon a poor man's child. Listen to the music of his sadness:

"I see the deep's untrampled floor
With green and purple seaweeds strown;
I see the waves upon the shore,
[redacted]light dissolved in star-showers, thrown:

I sit upon the sands alone,
The lightning of the noon-tide ocean
Is flashing round me, and a tone
Arises from its measured motion,
How sweet! did any heart now share in my emotion."

The sharp arrows of criticism were successfully directed against that next volume, and are said to have been the means of hurrying its author to that world of dreams and shadows, for which, in the critic's opinion, he was so pre-eminently fitted.

"Where is the youth, for deeds immortal born,
Who loved to whisper to th' embattled corn,
And cluster'd woodbines, breathing o'er the stream
Endymion's beauteous passion for a dream?"

You already smile, my friend; but, to know the heights and the depths, you must turn your attention to

numberless, unread, unheard-of volumes. Their authors did not suffer from the severity of the critic or the judge, but were only neglected. If Mephistopheles ever requires rest and seclusion—But, hark! is there not a laugh? and that grotesque face in the carved wood-work, how scoffingly it is looking down upon us!

Oh, that mine enemy had written a book!—and that it were my life; unless indeed it provoked my friend to write another.

It has always appeared to me a strong argument for the non-existence of spirits, that these friendly microscopic biographers are not haunted by the ghosts of the unfortunate men whom they persist in holding up to public contempt.

Private correspondence, unless upon literary or scientific subjects, ought not often to be published. The contrary practice has a very bad influence on the letter-writing of the present generation, who are thus tempted to write for effect, and who never can entirely forget the author in the friend.

We are frequently understood the least by those who have known us the longest.

The reasons which any man offers to you for his own conduct, betray his opinion of your character.

There is a versatility which appears profound: as there is a rapid motion of

unconnected things which presents an appearance of continuity.

If you are very often deceived by those around you, you may be sure that you deserve to be deceived; and that instead of railing at the general falseness of mankind, you have first to pronounce judgment on your own jealous tyranny, or on your own weak credulity.

Those only who can bear the truth will hear it.

The wisest maxims are not those which fortify us against the deceit of others.

Very subtle-minded persons often complain that their friends fall from them; and these complaints are not altogether unjust. One reason of this is that they

display so much dialectic astuteness on every occasion, that their friends feel certain that such men, however unjustifiably they may behave, will always be able to justify themselves to themselves. Now we mortals are strangely averse to loving those who are never in the wrong, and much more those who are always ready to prove themselves in the right.

You cannot ensure the gratitude of others for a favour conferred upon them in the way which is most agreeable to yourself.

How singularly mournful it is to observe in the conversation or writings of a very superior man and original thinker, homely, if not common-place expressions

about the vanity of human wishes, the mutability of this world, the weariness of life. It seems as if he felt that his own bitter experience had taken away the triteness from that which is nevertheless so trite; as if he thought it were needless to seek fine phrases, and as idle a mockery as it would be to gild an instrument of torture.

It must be a very weary day to the youth, when he first discovers that after all he will only become a man.

It is unwise for a great man to reason as if others were like him: it is much more unwise to treat them as if they were very different.

An author's works are his esoteric biography.

We are not so easily guided by our most prominent weaknesses, as by those of which we are least aware.

There was a law in the Roman empire, that he who foretold the death of the emperor should lose his own life. And shall the man who loves with an appearance of oracular wisdom to declare that our star has culminated; that the time has come; that there are manifest signs of decay; that our empire is fast fading from us—shall he be suffered with impunity to commit so great an offence against the majesty of the state? Such prophets

"Deserve the fate their fretting lips foretell."

Men are ruined by the exceptions to their general rules of action. This may seem a mockery, but it is nevertheless a fact to be observed in the records of history, as well as in the trivial occurrences of daily life. One who is habitually dark and deceptive, commits a single act of confidence, and his subtle schemes are destroyed for ever. His first act of extravagance ruins the cautious man. The coward is brave for a moment, and dies; the hero wavers for the first—and the last time.

If thy cause be just, choose for a judge an enemy rather than a friend. For thy friend often loveth thee too well to do thee justice; and surely thine enemy hateth thee too much to be unjust in thy cause.

Some persons are insensible to flattering words; but who can resist the flattery of modest imitation?

An inferior demon is not a great man, as some writers would fain persuade us.

The world would be in a more wretched state than it is at present, if riches and honours were distributed according to merit alone. It is the complaint of the wisest of men, that he "returned and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all." But if it were otherwise, if bread were indeed the portion of the wise, then the hungry

would have something to lament over, more severe even than the pangs of hunger. The belief that merit is generally neglected, forms the secret consolation of almost every human being, from the mightiest prince to the meanest peasant. Divines have contended that the world would cease to be a place of trial, if a system of impartial distribution according to merit were adopted. This is true : for it would then be a place of punishment.

There is no power in the wisdom of the insincere.

We long to search out the inscrutable mysteries of the grave, but we slight the knowledge of the death-bed, which it requires but little penetration to obtain.

It is there, on the couch of sorrow and of pain, that the thought of one purely virtuous action is like the shadow of a lofty rock in the desert—like the light footstep of that little child who continued to dance before the throne of the unjust king, when his guards had fled, and his people had forsaken him—like the single thin stream of light which the unhappy captive has at last learned to love—like the soft sigh before the breeze that wafts the becalmed vessel and her famished crew to the haven where they would be.

Conviction never abides without a welcome from the heart.

Indulge your imagination, if it must be indulged, in adorning the past, and not in creating the future.

Entrust a secret to one whose importance will not be much increased by divulging it.

"Complicated phenomena, in which several causes concurring, opposing, or quite independent of each other, operate at once, so as to produce a compound effect, may be simplified by subducting the effect of all the known causes, as well as the nature of the case permits, either by deductive reasoning, or by appeal to experience, and thus leaving, as it were, a residual phenomenon to be explained." *

The observation of residual phenomena is a means of discerning truth as useful to the student of human nature as it can

* *Discourse on the Study of Natural Philosophy*, by Sir John Herschel.

ever be to the natural philosopher. Consider the life of any eminent historical character. His actions are for the most part the necessary consequences of things over which he had little, if any, control. At first you might say that another person under the same circumstances, living at the same period, surrounded by the same friends and advisers, would have acted in a similar manner. Observe his conduct more attentively. Subduct the effect of all the known causes, as well as the nature of the case permits; there remains a something, perhaps only in the mode, only in the manner, which belongs to the individual—the residual phenomenon. From the slightest tint in the waters we may detect through what country the stream has taken its course.

It is necessary to be decisive; not because deliberate counsel would never improve your designs, but because the foolish and the unthinking will certainly act, if there be but a moment's pause.

Those who are always railing at metaphysics and psychology, are not to be blamed. Why should they be anxious to study anything in which they can have so little interest as the nature and powers of the mind?

Those who honestly discourage the study of metaphysics on account of what appears to them its abstruse nature and evil tendency, should remember the admirable advice that has been offered to

all such timid persons, by one of the greatest of modern metaphysicians.

"I would remind them, that as long as there are men in the world to whom the Γνῶθι σεαυτον is an instinct and a command from their own nature, so long will there be metaphysicians and metaphysical speculations; that false metaphysics can be effectually counteracted by true metaphysics alone; and that if the reasoning be clear, solid, and pertinent, the truth deduced can never be the less valuable on account of the depth from which it may have been drawn."*

The practical man—an especial favourite in this age—often takes the field with his single fact against a great

* *Biographia Literaria.*

principle, in the reckless spirit of one who would not hesitate to sever the thread on which he is unable to string his own individual pearl—perhaps a false one—even though he should scatter many jewels worthy of a prince's diadem.

Even the meanest are mighty to do evil.

Remember that to classify is the work of genius alone; and then judge how much faith ought to be reposed in the classifications which are generally received. Some adventitious circumstance, common to all, is made the connecting link between natures in reality differing in all their essential attributes: and then the world, delighted at its own sagacity,

hastens to compare the things or persons so judiciously classed, as if they were the same in kind.

If there is any one quality of the mind in which the really great have conspired, as it were, to surpass other men, it is moral courage. He who possesses this quality may sometimes be made a useful tool or a ready sacrifice in the hands of crafty statesmen; but let him be the chief, and not the subordinate, give him the field, grant him the opportunity, and his name will not deserve to be unwritten in the records of his country. When such a man perceives that if he fail, every one will be able to understand the risk that has been incurred; but that if he succeed, no one will estimate the danger that has silently been overcome; he

bows, nevertheless, to the supreme dictates of his own judgment, regardless alike of the honours of his own age, and the praises of posterity.

It requires some moral courage to disobey, and yet there have been occasions when obedience would have been defeat.

But it is not only in the council, in the senate, in the field, that its merits are so pre-eminent. In private life, what daily deceit would be avoided, what evils would be remedied, if men did but possess more moral courage!—not that false image of it which proceeds from a blind and inconsiderate rashness, from an absence both of forethought and imagination; but that calm reliance on the decisions of reason, that carelessness of the undeserved applause of our neighbour, which will induce the great man to

act according to his own informed judgment, and not according to the opinions of those who will not know, and who could never appreciate his motives.

Feeble applause may arise from a keen and fastidious sense of the slightest imperfection; but it is more frequently to be attributed to an inadequate notion of the dangers which have been avoided, and the difficulties which have been overcome.

The trifling of a great man is never trivial.

The study of abstruse and speculative subjects ought to be one of the most certain methods of implanting a spirit of

practical tolerance. He who has reasoned about his own identity, and entertained doubts upon the existence of the material world, cannot surely be astonished at finding two very different opinions upon any civil or religious question.

When two disputants relinquish a discussion, each apparently more convinced by his adversary's arguments of the goodness of his own cause, we imagine that debates of this kind can produce no beneficial effect. We are mistaken: after a well-fought battle both parties send their herald to claim a victory, but under cover of night the vanquished will find out their defeat, and retire in silence to their ships.

It is difficult to discover the estimation in which one man holds another's powers of mind by seeing them together. The soundest intellect and the keenest wit will sometimes shrink at the vivacity, and pay an apparent deference to the energy of mere cleverness: as Faust, when overcome by loud sophistry, exclaims, "He who is determined to be right, and has but a tongue, will be right undoubtedly."

You wonder that your friend listens with such patience to your catalogue of his peculiar faults and vices; while he thinks that you are but enumerating those distinctions which separate him from the multitude, and is somewhat flattered at finding himself an object of your continual attention.

He who, after considering the merits of a system, turns instantly to the attack upon it, does not always pursue the most judicious mode for the discovery of truth or the detection of error; and moreover he does not allow his own mind sufficient influence. Perhaps the mind from its manifold stores would have added strength to the system. Perhaps it would have detected the fallacy without having recourse to the arguments advanced against it by others. The most fatal bigotry may certainly be produced by reading only one side of a question, but at the same time it is not altogether wise to treat the intellect as a mere court of justice, and always to bring the accuser and the accused immediately to confront one another.

It is not to be forgotten that two

waves of light may interfere in such a manner as to produce total darkness.

If you would understand your own age, read the works of fiction produced in it. People in disguise speak freely.

It appears wonderful to you, that the world should continue to be deceived by the same deceiver: and you think that your knowledge of a crafty man's craftiness will assuredly defeat his most subtle machinations. Believe it not:—you may discover part of his schemes, *but there lives not a more complete dupe than he who sees through half the design of an accomplished dissembler.*

The account which Lord Bolingbroke

gives of Dr. Cudworth is, that he read too much to think enough, and admired too much to think freely. The first part of this sentence might be applied to many persons in our own day, but is peculiarly applicable to Cudworth, whose learning never, like that of Bishop Watson, enlivened by severe disdain, or by sarcastic bitterness, like that of Warburton, is oppressive in the extreme. But in the second clause there lurks a popular and dangerous fallacy. It is the man who sees but little to admire, that is always found to be the sure slave of some fatal prejudice. Nothing can be more unphilosophical than to adopt an eclectic method; but he who does not perceive something to admire in almost every system, will not choose the best when-

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ever it may be presented to his observation.

Wretched indeed is the mental state of that man who, by a strange fatality, is doomed to perceive the reflection of his own weak and inconclusive nature in all the works of others; and seeing that, and that only, scatters his censure with lavish profusion, in the vain hope that he is manifesting his own intellectual superiority.

You may be forgiven for an injury which, when made known to the world, will render you alone the object of its ridicule.

The habit of deluding our friends by sophisms, and of carrying on warfare by

throwing dust in the eyes of our antagonists, is as frequent now as ever it was in the days of the schoolmen. How unkind it is to sacrifice truth to the amusement of the passing moment! Has the wisest amongst us any more right to trifle with the meanest intellect, than the strong man has to spoil and oppress his neighbour? Is the abuse of intellectual power the less culpable, because no laws can be made to restrain it? But there is some comfort for the injured in this case. Such a mode of arguing infallibly brings with it its own punishment; and he who has long deceived his hearers will at last become the unconscious dupe of his own base sophistry.

We may sometimes be deluded into a right conclusion, but such results are like the countries we arrive at in our dreams;

and the very first inquiry as to how we could have performed the journey, convinces us that we have made no journey at all, and even in our sleep we know that it is but a dream.

The character of Bayle, as given by his great antagonist, is so applicable here, that, whether it be just or not, I shall make no apology for transcribing it. "Mr. Bayle, the last supporter of this paradox, is of a very different character from these Italian sophists, (Pomponatius and Cardan). A writer who, to the utmost strength and clearness of reasoning, hath added all the liveliness and delicacy of wit; who, pervading human nature at his ease, struck into the province of paradox, as an exercise for the unwearied vigour of his mind; who, with a soul superior to the

sharpest attacks of fortune, and a heart practised to the best philosophy, had not yet enough of real greatness to overcome that last foible of superior minds, the temptation of honour which the academic exercise of wit is conceived to bring to its professors."

There are many dangers like comets—terrible indeed in their aspect to the vulgar, but of such a nature that the heavens may be seen through them by philosophers.

When a subtle distinction is drawn between two characters, those who can discern its nature, in their delight at an intellectual triumph, will often neglect to perceive the injustice of its application.

The suspicious may perhaps have ceased to be guilty of the wickedness they are for ever imputing to others.

There are many who do not perceive, that in the endeavour to remove those ornaments which in their opinion conceal and finally subdue the best qualities of the heart, they are destroying the strongest aids to virtue. Romance, refinement, sensibility, are terms which of themselves will always provoke the idle laughter of the selfish, the coarse, and the hard-hearted. But it is vexatious to behold the real friends of virtue priding themselves on their strength of mind, and joining with the worldly and the hard-hearted, to decry that which often immediately proceeds from princi-

ples which they themselves would desire to see established, and acting upon which, they have undertaken so perilous an enterprise, with such unworthy allies. I know it may be said, that it is against the excess, that their ridicule is directed. But let them feel certain, that an intercourse with the world will destroy all that they would wish to be destroyed —and, alas! much more; and that they will never have cause to reproach their consciences with any omission in this matter.

Music recalls a state of feeling, and not merely a series of incidents. When we listen to the long-forgotten melody, we do not review the scenes and actions of our childhood in succession, but we

become for the moment children once again.

A celebrated writer has lamented that in our language so little has been said of music, worthy of such a subject. This neglect however may have arisen from a consciousness that words must ever sound so feeble in attempting to express the magic power of melody.

"Your music's power your music must disclose,
And what light is, 'tis only light that shows."

There are moments of indecision both before and after the most decided step of the most decisive of mankind, and very few there are who regard or profit by the latter. The reaction that every body may foresee both in himself and

others, is for the most part entirely disregarded,

It were certainly charitable, and perhaps just, to suppose, that it is in their haste to regain the paths of innocence, that the guilty so often add stupidity to guilt.

How little do they know of human nature, who imagine that pride is likely to be subdued by adversity.

If there is any one thing in which wisdom is pre-eminently conspicuous, it is in the wonderful ease with which its possessor is enabled to set apart the materials from which a correct opinion

may be formed. The fool perceives one circumstance, and cannot withhold his facile judgment. The man who suffers under prudence without wisdom, collects a vast body of disorderly facts which only serve to perplex his wearied understanding. That power of giving the best advice on sudden emergencies, and of conjecturing with felicity about future events, which the historian ascribes to Themistocles, and which might have been ascribed to Cæsar, and perhaps to Buonaparte, is mainly to be attributed to their avoiding these opposite errors of foolish prudence and imprudent folly.

The warmth of his friend's heart is the last thing of which a wise man is certain;

but the first which a fool is sure to discover and to boast of.

We must often consider, not what the wise will think, but what the foolish will be sure to say.

The self-love which Rochefoucauld discovers in all our actions, which, to use his own words, settles on external things, only as the bee doth on flowers, to extract what may be serviceable, is merely the condition of existence. Language has descended to us unprepared for the discussion of such a question as the followers of Rochefoucauld would press upon us. We are entangled in a web of words; and when we begin to argue, we are but seeking refuge in the strong-

holds of the enemy. And why should we commence a fruitless investigation, in order to destroy a system which, unless the heart indeed be the dupe of the head, will never gain any abiding credence?

The better order of mankind will always believe that

> ———"To live by law,
> Acting the law we live by without fear,
> And, because right is right, to follow right,
> Were wisdom in the scorn of consequence."

And they will love virtue,

> "Not as men value gold, because it tricks
> And blazons outward life with ornament,
> But rather as the miser—for itself."

Those who lament that it is impossible to do a purely disinterested action, may

enjoy their lamentations in the society of those sages who would repiningly proclaim that the human eye is not quite achromatic; and that the moon might, for all earthly purposes, have been better placed upon the economical system suggested by Laplace.

The image that appeared to king Nebuchadnezzar in a dream, was made of gold, of silver, of iron, and of clay. The idol of this world differs from that seen by the Babylonian monarch; for it is all gold—pure gold—and does not even possess the humanity of clay.

Few will at first be pleased with those thoughts which are entirely new to them, and which, if true, they feel to be truths

which they should never have discovered for themselves.

Perhaps if the power of becoming beautiful were granted to the ugliest of mankind, he would only wish to be so changed, that when changed he might be considered a very handsome likeness of his former self.

Wise sayings often fall on barren ground; but a kind word is never thrown away.

THE END.

Glasgow: Wilson & M'Cormick, Saint Vincent Street.

A LIST

OF THE

WORKS OF SIR ARTHUR HELPS.

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Arranged in Chronological Order.

Thoughts in the Cloister and the Crowd. 1835.
Essays Written in the Intervals of Business. 1841.
King Henry the Second; an Historical Drama. 1843.
Catherine Douglas; a Tragedy. 1843.
The Claims of Labour. First Edition. 1844.
Do. do. do. Second Edition, with Supplementary Essay *On the Means of Improving the Health and Increasing the Comfort of the Labouring Classes.* 1845.
Friends in Council. Book I. 1847.
Do. do. Book II. 1849.
Do. do. Second Series, 2 vols. 1859.
A Letter from one of the Special Constables in London, on the late occasion of their being called out to keep the peace. 1848.
The Conquerors of the New World and their Bondsmen. Vol. I., 1848; vol. II. 1852.
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THOUGHTS

IN THE

CLOISTER AND THE CROWD.

"Quam sedulo sit cavendum in investigatione rerum ne entia realia cum entibus rationis confundamus: aliud enim est inquirere in rerum naturam, aliud in modos quibus res à nobis percipiuntur."—

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